

# PEER EDITING CHECKLIST: AMERICAN LITERATURE ADVANCED!



REMEMBER THE GOLDEN  
RULE: PROOFREAD YOUR  
PARTNER'S ESSAY AS  
CAREFULLY AS YOU HOPE HE  
OR SHE PROOFREADS YOUR  
ESSAY



# Essay Title Examples

- Little Montenegro: An Analysis of Jay Gatsby as an African American Man
- The (Not So) Great Gatsby: An Examination of Nick as Narrator of *The Great Gatsby*
- Remember that the first part of the title is the creative section, and the part of the title after the colon is ties to the thesis.



# INTRODUCTION

- Does the author find an interesting way to begin her essay?
- Is the introduction short and clear?
- Does the intro give the author and COMPLETE title of the book being discussed? (This doesn't need to be in the THESIS; it just needs to show up somewhere in the intro.)
- Is the THESIS statement the last sentence of the intro?



# THESIS STATEMENT

- Is the THESIS clearly written?
- Does it contain the nuance of the writer's argument?
- Does the THESIS make it perfectly clear where the essay is going; in other words, is it a clear road map for the reader?



# WORKS CITED

(IF APPLICABLE)

- Is the heading on the Works Cited page correct?
- Are all the entries in alphabetical order?
- Is each entry written correctly?
- Is the spacing on the page correct?
- <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/12/>



# IN-TEXT CITATIONS

- Is each quotation cited correctly? Page number? Author's name?
- Is each quotation properly introduced or blended with the author's own words?
- Does each citation correspond with its respective entry on the Works Cited page?
- Is the MLA format correct for all punctuation and spacing?
- <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/>



# TEXTUAL EVIDENCE

- Is each piece of textual evidence the best evidence the author can use to prove his or her THESIS?
- Does the passage given make sense; that is, should the author cut some of the passage or give more of the passage to best prove his/her THESIS?



# ANALYSIS OF EVIDENCE

- After textual evidence is given in the essay, does the author fully explain how the evidence proves his THESIS. (This is Level 4 thinking: Analysis.)
- Does the author 'unpack' the quotation by pointing to specific diction from the passage?
- Should the author add to her explanation to strengthen her argument?
- Should the author cut part of his explanation to strengthen his argument?



# SUMMARY VS. ANALYSIS

- Are the body paragraphs packed with analysis of the text as opposed to simply retelling what happened in the story.
- If any sections feel like simple summery, either cut them or shorten them considerably to get to the analysis.
- Don't explain what happened, explain your interpretation of what happened.



# ORGANIZATION OF ARGUMENT

- After reading through all of the body paragraphs in the essay, do you feel that the author has logically organized her or his evidence in the right order?
- Do you have any suggestions on how to better organize the argument to best prove the author's THESIS?



# CONCLUSION

- Does the author have some kind of concluding paragraph?
- Reminder: this doesn't need to be a long-winded paragraph; rather, it should drive home major ideas for the reader and tie up loose ends to best support the THESIS.
- Do not begin with "In conclusion," "To conclude," or "Finally." Those transitional phrases only exist for the most rudimentary of writers, of which you should not strive to be one.
- Does the conclusion make the essay feel complete?



# GRAMMAR/CLARITY

- Is the essay generally free from simple grammatical mistakes: its/it's, their/they're/there, to/two/too, then/than, your/you're, a lot/allot, misplaced apostrophes, capitalization of proper nouns, etc.
- Are the sentences clearly written? Do they all SOUND right? If they don't SOUND right, they aren't right!
- Are there any run-ons or sentence fragments?
- Did the author have someone other than her/himself proofread the essay?



# DICTION

- Does the author use any vague words: things, something, stuff, etc.?
- Does the author use any words incorrectly? (This can often happen when a writer is trying to sound smart or when a writer uses a thesaurus without care.)
- Is the writer attempting to take his writing to the next level with strong diction?
- Where could the writer use stronger diction? (Use



# ERRONEOUS DICTION

- Skim through the essay to eliminate the following words and phrases:
  - I think
  - I believe
  - really
  - very
  - a little bit
  - kind of
  - and other informal phrases/diction



# SENTENCE VARIETY

- Did the author use any semi-colons and colons?
- Are they used correctly?
- Are the length of her sentences varied in a way that creates voice and rhythm to the writing?
- Is the writing engaging, or are the sentences monotonous and boring?



# ONE LAST WORD...

- Did the author follow all of the criteria of the assignment?
- Double check the assignment handout to check if the author has included all parts of the assignment.